



Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • www.scdhec.gov

Measles (Rubeola)

What Is Measles?	Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by a virus. Complications caused by the virus, such as diarrhea, encephalitis or pneumonia, can occur in as many as 3 out of 10 cases. Complications are most often seen in children under 5 years of age, or adults over the age of 20.
What are the symptoms?	The initial symptoms of measles include fever, cough and runny nose. These symptoms are followed in about 2-4 days by a rash. The rash usually lasts 5-6 days.
How is Measles treated?	Measles is caused by a virus, so antibiotics will not help. Most people recover completely on their own. The best treatment is supportive treatment, which includes rest, drinking plenty of fluids and over-the-counter medications to reduce the fever and headache.
How do people catch this disease?	Measles are spread primarily from person to person by airborne respiratory droplets. The disease is very contagious and is spread to as many as 9 out of 10 close contacts who have not had the disease earlier or have not been vaccinated.
What can be done to stop the spread of this disease?	The Measles vaccine (MMR) provides permanent protection against measles. The vaccine is recommended for all infants at 12 months of age. It is also a requirement to attend day care or school in South Carolina.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Region 7

Serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties

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